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County Employment and Wages in Oregon – Fourth Quarter 2016

All six of Oregon's large counties had employment gains from December 2015 to December 2016, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2015 annual average employment.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that all of the large counties in Oregon had rates of job gain above the 1.2-percent national average. Employment increases ranged from 2.8 percent in Washington and Marion Counties to 1.8 percent in Multnomah County. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment increased from December 2015 to December 2016 in 280 of the 344 largest U.S. counties. Williamson, Tenn., had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 5.1 percent over the year. Lafayette, La., had the largest percentage employment decline among the large U.S. counties, down 5.1 percent.

Among the large counties in Oregon, Multnomah had the highest employment (498,800) in December 2016. Together, the six large counties accounted for 71.9 percent of Oregon's total employment. Nationwide, the 344 largest counties made up 72.8 percent of total U.S. employment.

From the fourth quarter of 2015 to the fourth quarter of 2016, Washington County's 5.8-percent decline in average weekly wages was the largest among Oregon's large counties. Nationally, the average weekly wage decreased 1.5 percent to \$1,067 in the fourth quarter of 2016. This is one of only eight declines for the nation in the history of the series which, dates back to 1978.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 30 counties with employment below 75,000 in Oregon. Wage levels in all of these smaller counties were below the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

Three of Oregon's 6 large counties had over-the-year wage decreases in December 2016. As noted, the largest decline was in Washington County (-5.8 percent). Washington County also had the highest weekly wage among the state's largest counties (\$1,209). Three large counties had over-the-year wage gains in the fourth quarter of 2016. Jackson County had the largest increase (1.5 percent).

Among the 344 large U.S. counties, 290 had over-the-year wage decreases in the fourth quarter of 2016. McLean, Ill., had the largest percentage decline in average weekly wages (-9.2 percent). Clay, Mo., had the second largest decrease in average weekly wages, down 8.3 percent, followed by Lafayette, La. (-8.0 percent) and Douglas, Colo. (-6.8 percent).

Forty-eight large U.S. counties experienced over-the-year increases in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest wage gain, up 11.3 percent from the fourth quarter of 2015. Washington, Pa., was second with a wage gain of 4.9 percent, followed by Marin, Calif. (4.3 percent) and Elkhart, Ind. (4.0 percent).

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in Washington County (\$1,209, 49th) and Multnomah County (\$1,099, 76th) placed in the top third among the 344 largest U.S. counties. Average weekly wages in the state's remaining four large counties ranged from \$987 to \$803 in the fourth quarter of 2016.

Nationally, 100 large counties had average weekly wages above the U.S. average in the fourth quarter of 2016. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,365. New York, N.Y., was second at \$2,212, followed by San Mateo, Calif., at \$2,098 and San Francisco, Calif., at \$2,068.

Seventy-one percent of the large U.S. counties (243) had average weekly wages below the national average of \$1,067. Cameron, Texas, had the lowest weekly wage (\$640), followed by Hidalgo, Texas (\$648) and Horry, S.C. (\$654).

Average weekly wages in Oregon's smaller counties

All of the 30 smaller counties in Oregon, those with employment below 75,000, had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$1,067. Benton County had the highest weekly wage (\$981), followed by Morrow (\$953). Wheeler had the lowest weekly wage in the state, averaging \$551 in the fourth quarter of 2016. (See [table 2](#).)

When all 36 counties in Oregon were considered, 7 counties had average weekly wages under \$699, 17 reported wages from \$700 to \$799, 7 had wages from \$800 to \$899, 3 had wages from \$900 to \$999, and 2 had wages above \$1,000. (See [chart 1](#).)

Additional statistics and other information

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the [Technical Note](#) or visit www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2015 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2016 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2015* are now available online at <https://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn15.htm>. The 2016 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2017.

The County Employment and Wages release for first quarter 2017 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, September 6, 2017.

Beginning with the release of first quarter 2017 data, the program will switch to the 2017 version of the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) as the basis for the assignment and tabulation of economic data by industry. For more information on the change, please see the Federal Register notice at www.census.gov/eos/www/naics/federal_register_notices/notices/fr08au16.pdf.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 9.7 million employer reports cover 141.9 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level. Data for all states, Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs), counties, and the nation are available on the BLS Web site at www.bls.gov/cew/; however, data in QCEW press releases have been revised (see Technical Note below) and may not match the data contained on the Bureau's Web site.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 6 largest counties in Oregon, fourth quarter 2016

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2015-16 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	143,749.9	1.2	--	\$1,067	--	-1.5	--
Oregon	1,860.7	2.4	--	970	22	-1.0	16
Clackamas, Ore.....	159.6	2.4	76	987	161	-1.0	120
Jackson, Ore.	87.3	2.4	76	803	319	1.5	12
Lane, Ore.	153.9	2.4	76	845	295	0.8	24
Marion, Ore.	149.4	2.8	50	861	283	0.7	25
Multnomah, Ore.....	498.8	1.8	114	1,099	76	-0.1	55
Washington, Ore.....	288.2	2.8	50	1,209	49	-5.8	339

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Oregon, fourth quarter 2016

Area	Employment December 2016	Average Weekly Wage(1)
United States(2)	143,749,910	\$1,067
Oregon	1,860,691	970
Baker	5,420	689
Benton	37,106	981
Clackamas	159,594	987
Clatsop	17,909	702
Columbia	11,090	729
Coos	22,784	729
Crook	5,985	854
Curry	6,492	674
Deschutes	77,821	838
Douglas	37,934	767
Gilliam	793	769
Grant	2,370	719
Harney	2,414	661
Hood River	13,062	756
Jackson	87,261	803
Jefferson	6,491	720
Josephine	26,225	717
Klamath	22,793	733
Lake	2,442	737
Lane	153,925	845
Lincoln	17,850	698
Linn	45,746	837
Malheur	12,837	664
Marion	149,400	861
Morrow	5,473	953
Multnomah	498,798	1,099
Polk	19,540	703
Sherman	836	894
Tillamook	9,167	724
Umatilla	29,966	749
Union	9,950	714
Wallowa	2,471	672
Wasco	11,073	758
Washington	288,202	1,209
Wheeler	308	551
Yamhill	34,580	791

Footnotes(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2016

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2016 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2015-16	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2015-16	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	143,749.9	1.2	1067	--	-1.5	--
Alabama	1,932.6	0.7	901	35	-1.3	21
Alaska	310.0	-1.9	1038	17	-5.2	51
Arizona	2,760.1	2.1	945	25	-2.2	34
Arkansas	1,205.4	0.4	827	47	-1.4	22
California	16,923.3	1.9	1271	5	-0.3	4
Colorado	2,588.6	2.0	1086	12	-1.5	24
Connecticut	1,685.5	0.0	1289	4	-3.4	46
Delaware	441.2	-0.1	1055	15	-2.9	44
District of Columbia	760.9	0.5	1763	1	0.6	2
Florida	8,538.9	2.7	942	27	-1.8	28
Georgia.....	4,349.3	2.4	993	20	-0.9	14
Hawaii.....	658.3	0.7	954	24	-0.3	4
Idaho	691.6	3.2	800	50	-0.4	8
Illinois	5,947.6	0.4	1122	9	-2	31
Indiana.....	3,021.7	0.9	883	38	-0.9	14
Iowa	1,542.0	0.1	911	33	-1	16
Kansas	1,384.5	0.1	877	39	-2.2	34
Kentucky.....	1,894.2	0.6	874	41	-1.4	22
Louisiana	1,907.4	-1.6	914	32	-2.9	44
Maine.....	602.6	0.8	855	43	-2.1	33
Maryland.....	2,666.7	1.0	1169	7	-0.4	8
Massachusetts	3,530.4	1.3	1352	2	-2.4	39
Michigan	4,283.0	1.5	1026	19	-1.6	25
Minnesota.....	2,839.7	1.2	1062	14	-1.1	18
Mississippi.....	1,134.0	0.0	756	51	-1.8	28
Missouri	2,783.2	0.9	918	31	-1.7	27
Montana	456.5	0.7	822	48	0.5	3
Nebraska	972.4	0.0	876	40	-0.5	10
Nevada	1,307.8	2.7	924	29	-1.2	20
New Hampshire.....	656.9	1.3	1092	10	-4.1	48
New Jersey.....	4,042.1	1.4	1239	6	-1.9	30
New Mexico	811.4	0.0	844	45	-2.5	41
New York	9,332.5	1.2	1342	3	-2.3	36
North Carolina	4,326.3	1.8	932	28	-0.7	13
North Dakota	414.4	-3.2	978	21	-4.2	49
Ohio	5,365.6	0.7	943	26	-2.3	36
Oklahoma	1,587.7	-1.2	864	42	-3.5	47
Oregon	1,860.7	2.4	970	22	-1	16
Pennsylvania	5,799.8	0.7	1039	16	-2.3	36
Rhode Island	478.3	0.0	1027	18	-1.6	25
South Carolina.....	2,024.3	1.8	855	43	-0.6	12
South Dakota.....	419.9	0.5	828	46	-0.5	10
Tennessee	2,947.5	1.8	970	22	-1.1	18
Texas	11,974.7	1.2	1072	13	-2.5	41
Utah	1,415.1	2.9	910	34	-0.3	4
Vermont.....	312.6	0.1	897	36	-2.4	39
Virginia.....	3,831.6	0.6	1091	11	-0.3	4
Washington.....	3,227.9	2.8	1150	8	1.7	1
West Virginia	693.1	-1.6	809	49	-2.5	41
Wisconsin	2,842.4	0.5	924	29	-2	31
Wyoming	265.8	-3.9	894	37	-4.7	50
Puerto Rico.....	928.2	-0.3	555	(3)	-1.9	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	38.5	0.2	769	(3)	-1.8	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

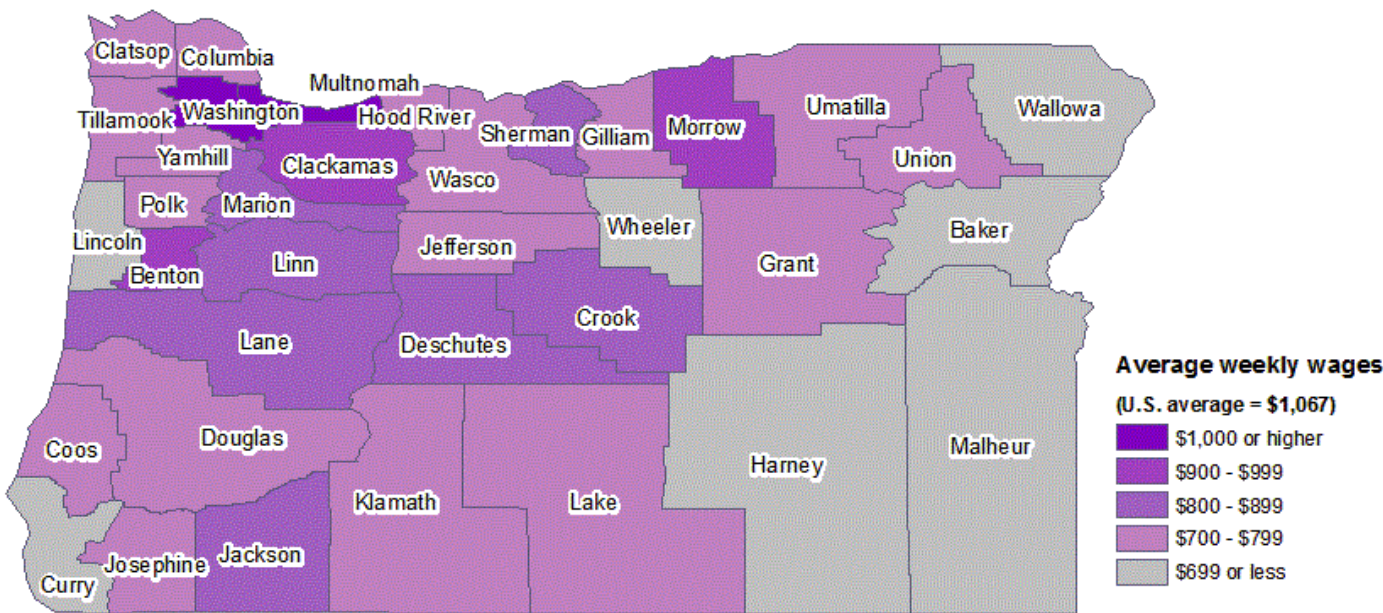
(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Oregon, fourth quarter 2016



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.